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ABSTRACT

As a dimension of a total school reform initiative, the Delcroft School faculty, committed to a more integrative literacy curriculum, implemented a proposed framework to align teaching/learning/assessment. The staff was already committed to implementing the integrative curriculum framework of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the new framework would enable the Delcroft teachers to work through a dynamic process to develop a more authentic curriculum-sensitive assessment system using written retellings. This report documents the qualitative process and quantitative outcomes of the effort. An appendix contains the framework. (Contains 2 tables of data and 21 references.) (Author/NKA)

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TOWARD TEACHING/LEARNING/ASSESSMENT REFORM

A Five Year Exploration of Using Written Retellings as a Congruent Dimension of an Integrative Literacy Curriculum

by Dr. Morton Botel, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania; Dr Cathy Luna, Graduate School of Education, University of Massachusetts; and Conne Broderick, Delcroft School, Folcroft, Pennsylvania.

ABSTRACT

As a dimension of a total school reform initiative, the Delcroft School faculty, committed to a more integrative literacy curriculum, implemented a proposed framework to align teaching/learning/assessment. This report documents the qualitative process and quantitative outcomes of the effort.

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THE FRAMEWORK

In March 1993, Rhonda Lauer, Superintendent of the Southeast Delco Schools in Pennsylvania, asked Morton Botel to join the staff in developing, implementing and researching their Goals 2000 reform plan, fulfilling the requirement of all Pennsylvania school districts to meet the Curriculum Standards of the Commonwealth.

Lauer had just obtained a provisional award of $250,000 per year for five years from the ARCO Corporation to enable the schools to develop and implement an integrative and comprehensive school improvement plan. In particular, she was interested in having him design and research a comprehensive framework that would link teaching/learning/assessment. One of the requirements of the assessment framework was that it would yield quantitative as well as qualitative evidence of student outcomes, because we wanted several kinds of evidence on how well the reform effort was working. Also, as a major stakeholder in the success of the reform, ARCO wanted quantitative evidence of the effectiveness of the reform plan at the end of each funding year as a key basis for determining whether or not to continue their financial support. As it turned out, ARCO backed out of its support at the end of two years because Superintendent Lauer, who got the grant, left the district. But the staff of Delcroft School determined that they would continue the process and we agreed to continue working with them.

Specifically, Botel proposed a framework that would enable the Delcroft teachers to work through a dynamic process to develop a more authentic curriculum-sensitive assessment system using written retellings. This process would incorporate articulated learning experiences: talking/writing/reading across the curriculum.

At the time we began, Bonnie George, the principal of the Delcroft school, a K-5 school in a working class community, and her faculty volunteered to pilot the project. The Delcroft staff was already committed to implementing the integrative curriculum framework of the Pennsylvania Department of Education: THE PENNSYLVANIA FRAMEWORK: Reading, Writing and Talking across the Curriculum (Lytle & Botel,1988). Many of the teachers at Delcroft School had completed or were taking a one or two year-long continuing education seminar based on THE PENNSYLVANIA FRAMEWORK, on site, offered by the PENN Literacy Network (Botel, Ripley & Barnes,1992, Botel, Botel-Sheppard & Renninger, 1994).

Botel's proposal was influenced by the conclusions of Peter Drucker(1985). Drucker investigated a number of fields to determine the bases on which innovations become successful since he was struck with the fact that historically very few innovations endure. Drucker concluded from his research that if an innovation was to survive, two principal conditions must be met: 1) the innovation needed to be reasonably simple and yet have a comprehensive system for implementation, dissemination

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and accountability and 2) the effort had to begin small. Keeping these concepts in mind, the Botel proposal, following consultation with Delcroft teachers on various options for a written retelling performance assessment, began with the following five framing ideas:

1. The pre and post written retelling activities each year from grades K to 5 would include both literary and expository texts. Children would be assessed on the analysis of written retellings of each of these texts for comprehension of content and separately for mechanics. Using both literary and expository texts would symbolically represent a commitment to improve teaching/learning across the curriculum.

2. The written retellings would be assessed by all teachers working collaboratively in grade level groups. Assessment would be both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative aspect of the assessment would involve two dimensions: 1) the teachers' insights and judgment in the dynamic process of discussing children's written retellings with their colleagues, 2) teachers' perception of the effect of their collegial discussions on teaching/learning in their classrooms over the course of the project, and 3) observations of the authors of this report. This qualitative evidence along with the quantitative assessment of the pre and post written retelling activities would inform all stakeholders of the process and outcomes of the program.

3. Teachers over the five years would continue to develop and use written retellings, many other reading/writing/talking activities and other productive learning experiences such as discussions, dramatizations, and illustrations to enhance children's comprehension and construction of meaning across the curriculum.

4. The entire process would involve continuous opportunities for professional development for the entire staff, practically of it to be held during the regular school day over the course of the study.

5. In support of the district's newly instituted "full inclusion" policy, all teachers and all children in the school would be involved in the teaching/learning/assessment activities.

Underlying these principles is the unifying and enabling idea expressed by Darling-Hammond regarding a successful reform process. It "...should aim to create a system in which improved teacher knowledge and equalized school capacity are the starting points for systemic change. In such a system, teachers and schools will have the knowledge, resources, and organizational supports to create appropriate curriculum and useful assessments for the students they serve (1994, p. 478).

WHY WRITTEN RETELLINGS?

There are several reasons why a written retelling process as we conceived it was appropriate. First, it was an integrative teaching/learning activity that involved both literary and informational content which

children experienced through listening, talking, writing and reading. The written products, in addition to having been a consequence of a holistic learning experience was a performance that could be assessed quantitatively.

Second, the research findings on story retellings suggest that they enhance oral language, reading comprehension and knowledge of story structure (Keefe, 1992; Gambrell, Koskinen & Kapinus 1991; Golden and Pappas,1987; Goodman, Watson & Burke,1987; Morrow, 1986, 1992). In Morrow's (1992) review of story retelling research, she made the connection between teaching and assessment: "Story retelling offers not only an instructional technique, but an evaluative one as well...Because it is a holistic procedure, retelling is strikingly different from the traditional piecemeal questioning approach to developing and assessing comprehension." (p.50). In fact the written retelling assessment might reasonably be called a "comprehensive literacy assessment."

Third, by having the teacher read the texts aloud first, all children will hear good interpretations of the texts and thus be enabled to be successful in experiencing the texts. If children were required to read the text first, kindergartners and first graders and many slow readers at the higher grade levels would have found the texts to be at their frustration levels and therefore incomprehensible.

Fourth, by having children in pairs retell the narrative and informational texts to one another after hearing them, all will get an opportunity to collaborate with peers by orally rehearsing the reconstruction of the story before they write down their versions of the story.

Fourth, by having children reflect on and revise their written retellings over several days, they get valuable experience with the writing process.

Finally, a written retelling for each child, makes it easier and less time consuming for teachers to assess the children's retellings as compared with the more common practice of assessing each individual child's oral retelling of a text they have read.

Teachers at Delcroft were given a how to do it framework based on the principles stated above. The current version of the framework, which appears in the appendix of this report, benefits from our experience in implementing the framework and therefore is useful for those who would initiate a similar process. Throughout the professional development process teachers were constantly encouraged to apply their considerable knowledge of teaching and of their children to make the process work on their behalf.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the research dimension of this reform effort we wanted to find answers to two major questions:

1. How and how well was the written retelling reform implemented?
2. Did the children, on the average, make significant "value added" improvement in their written retellings in content and mechanics on both narrative and expository texts?

THE IMPLEMENTATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Introduction

(While the Appendix details the current Botel framework, we indicate here briefly the features of the proposal so as to make sense of the rest of this report. First, the teacher reads the text aloud twice. Then children in pairs retell the story or informational text to one another. Each child then does a written retelling draft. For two more days they work on revision of their drafts. K-1 teachers score each written retelling on a revised Marie Clay 8-point scale. Second to fifth grade teachers, meeting in grade level groups, rank all written retellings at their grade level, develop the local norms and score all retellings based on them. These norms are used for the five years of the study.)

That first year was busy! In late May of 1993, we introduced the Delcroft faculty to what we had begun to call "The Written Retelling Project through a ninety minute "mini-workshop." The most enjoyable and probably the most convincing part of this presentation involved Conne leading her colleagues through a retelling of James Thurber's modern folktale "The Scotty Who Knew too Much" (a parable related to typical, "bring in the outside expert" approaches to staff development!). After listening to the story read aloud, colleagues paired up and told the story to each other. Although they did not have time to sample the revising and editing activities, teachers had a chance to write first drafts. Before the workshop, we worried about teachers' responses to the proposal; we knew it would not succeed if they did not believe in its worth. When two teachers shared their very different but equally humorous and well-written versions of "The Scotty" to appreciative applause, we knew we were on our way .

Almost every teacher (all but one) volunteered to try out a narrative retelling process in her classroom before the end of the year. Asked to identify questions and concerns arising from this experience, teachers wondered, "How much staff development will be provided?' "Will time be

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provided for teachers to meet?" and "How will our report card change to reflect this process?" One teacher commented that, in order to rate the retellings, "we have to be able to determine what we want students to be able to do."

Despite these concerns, it was already apparent that many teachers were excited about the project and shared our hopes for some of its benefits. They said, "This is great for involving more teachers in writing." "Retelling is a comfortable start for those uncomfortable with writing." "The team approach is encouraging," and "This allows for differences in the learning styles of our children."

In June, Delcroft's principal Bonnie George and Conne met with each grade level team to determine times during the summer when they could participate in a workshop that would take place across three half days. Largely due to Bonnie's demonstrated support for the project, eighty percent of Delcroft's faculty signed up for one of the two workshop series. Because of the Arco Corporation grant, the school district was able to pay teachers for the work they would be doing during these sessions.

We had five goals for the summer workshops--goals which reflect our emphasis on teachers' active participation in the adaptation (rather than the adoption) of the original proposal. The original "Workshop Agenda" lists these objectives: 1) Refine beginning and end of year story/news retelling process; 2) Create list of ideas for integrative language activities encouraging students to take on roles of professional readers and writers; 3) Introduce possibilities for qualitative assessment; 4) Practice and refine the rating process: and, 5) Create a plan for continuing professional development. Clearly, we hoped that teachers would not only adapt the retelling and rating processes to work in their classrooms, but that they would also generate ideas for related teaching/learning/assessment activities and plan for their own and their colleagues' ongoing professional development.

During the workshop sessions, teachers met in small groups--often with grade level partners--tried out an expository retelling, planned sample lessons, brainstormed issues and solutions, practiced rating student papers (collected during the spring 'try out'), looked closely at samples of student writing using a descriptive review process , and created specific guidelines for retelling and rating processes at each grade level. At times, the process of creating "standardized" grade level procedures was harrowing, making decisions about the retelling and rating processes raised many important but thorny questions about teaching, learning and assessment. These issues ranged from specific questions about the process--"Should we show the story on an overhead while we read it aloud?" "Can students draw instead of taking notes?" "How do we choose revision partners?"- to more general questions about writing and assessment - "Does

retelling assess reading or writing or both?" "How important is creativity?" "What makes an expository retelling really 'good'?"

What became clear during these three half days was the energy and the professional knowledge that teachers brought to the process. Given the opportunity to make decisions about how the assessment should be conducted, they took this responsibility seriously and worked hard to adapt the original proposal to fit their contexts. This work necessarily involved difficult compromises; since beginning and end of year retelling and rating processes needed to be "standardized" by the teachers for each grade level, there were times when one teacher might have to accept a decision that did not feel right to her. Fortunately, teachers knew that the beginning and end of the year retellings were only the beginning, and that, throughout the year, they could try out many variations in their classrooms.

Adaptations to Original Proposal

Since the beginning and end of year retelling process, once established, needed to remain standardized for the five years of the project, we encouraged Delcroft faculty to make adaptations to the original retelling process specified in Botel's proposal. Some changes were made across grade levels; these included 1) developing some prior knowledge of the story topics with students before reading them the story; 2) either showing students the story itself or using some type of visual aid during the initial story reading by the teacher; and 3) encouraging students to add to their notes after the second reading of the story. Other changes were grade specific. For example, because they believed that part of what they wanted to assess was their students' ability to use appropriate resources when writing, teachers in grade levels two and above decided to allow students to use dictionaries and thesauruses during the editing process if they requested them. Kindergarten and Grade One teachers felt that their students were not developmentally ready to benefit from Day Three's editing process, and revised the retelling procedure to include only two days. Each grade level separately refined the revision and editing checklists provided in the original proposal so that their language was appropriate; in second grade, for instance, the editing checklist included actual punctuation marks along with their labels. All of these changes were accompanied by a great deal of discussion and negotiation. Although it was sometimes arduous, ultimately many teachers found this process useful and commented on the pleasure of hearing and learning from knowledgeable colleagues. Some issues were never "settled" to a grade level groups' satisfaction, and this has led to continuing conversations about issues such as how to pair up students for revision, how long to allow students to draw rather than take notes, and how to introduce the retelling process to students in a way that encourages them to be creative as well as to demonstrate a grasp of the "gist" of the story in their retelling.

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During the summer workshops, while doing "practice" ratings with actual student papers, Delcroft teachers adapted the rating process, too. In kindergarten and first grades, the major adaptation was to add the phrase "related to the story" to levels 4 through 8 of Marie Clay's rating scale (thus, level four becomes "Any recognizable word *related to the story.*") This change allowed students' ratings to reflect their comprehension of the story, as well as the development of their facility with writing. Because of their excitement with their students' work, Kindergarten and Grade One teachers also decided to begin developing, for future use, another language development scale focused on meaning and verbal fluency which they would use to describe and assess story retellings that students dictated rather than wrote out themselves. For grades Two and above, teachers agreed to stick with the rating process established in the original proposal; however, they refined them by establishing efficient procedures for rating both content and mechanics. One group recommended that each teacher (except the reader) "vote" on a certain rating by showing one, two, three or four fingers (similar to the Scissors, Rock, Paper game!) after a paper was read aloud; this easy process caught on and ended up being used at most grade levels. For rating mechanics, most groups passed papers to each teacher who would write a rating on the back of the paper. The most prevalent mechanics rating would be assigned to that piece.

One of the most difficult, yet ultimately rewarding, aspects of rating sessions over the past three years has been developing a shared sense of what constitutes a good narrative or expository retelling. A question that has arisen again and again has been whether the ratings should reflect "comprehension" or "writing ability." Fortunately, this question has turned out to be largely academic; the most creative retellings have also demonstrated a good grasp of the point of the story, if not the specific details. In addition, although "what exactly we're rating" has remained an issue for some teachers, others have expressed a growing appreciation for the validity of a holistic approach to rating which does not necessitate trying to separately assess a student's understanding of a story and his or her ability to communicate that understanding. This shift has been reflected in the rating process as teachers have begun to pay less attention to some specific criteria which we generated and listed after first choosing anchor papers for each rating level and paying more attention to the anchor papers themselves as benchmarks against which to rate new student papers.

Continuing Professional Development

At least one teacher from each grade level participated in the summer workshops; these teachers worked with us to educate their grade partners about the retelling and rating processes at a two hour all faculty meeting during fall orientation days. Over the past three years, other staff development sessions related to the project have included hour-long

workshops on Wednesday early release afternoons (three to five per year), many grade level team meetings devoted to talking about the retelling project and related activities, and two meetings where Delcroft faculty shared their concerns, questions and satisfactions with the authors of this report. However, according to Delcroft teachers, the most important professional development has taken place during the beginning and end of year rating sessions when grade groups have spent two mornings or afternoons (approximately three hour sessions) looking together at their students' writing. The value of this uninterrupted, focused professional time spent with colleagues can not be overrated, as we report more specifically later in this article. The benefits for teachers of these rating sessions ranged from increased knowledge of the writing abilities and needs of their students to heightened respect for the expertise of their colleagues.

REPORT OF QUALITATIVE OUTCOMES

The following report on the qualitative outcomes of this project is informed by a range of data collected by Cathy Luna and Conne Broderick over the past three years. After every meeting or rating session, we have asked Delcroft teachers to fill out a written reaction sheet, answering questions such as "What stood out for you from this meeting?" or "What questions or concerns do you have about the retelling project at this point?" Teachers have also answered several more general questionnaires and surveys about the impact of the retelling project, the most recent of which (Feb. 1996) we draw on extensively in this section. In addition, Cathy Luna has interviewed several Delcroft teachers, Delcroft's principal, Bonnie George, and two of the authors for this report, Morton Botel and Conne Broderick. Finally, along with site documents collected from meetings, rating sessions and classrooms, Cathy Luna's field notes from extensive participant observation over the past three years serve to inform our report on the effects of the Written Retelling Process at Delcroft.

How Teachers Used Qualitative Information about Students' Reading/Writing/Talking Abilities

Delcroft teachers report that participating in rating sessions has given them a great deal of information about the reading/writing/talking abilities and needs of their students, both as a group and as individuals. In particular, teachers cite story comprehension and the mechanics of writing as areas in which they have learned about their students during rating sessions. Teachers have also gleaned more process-oriented kinds of information about students from the actual retelling procedure. Watching students go through the three-day retelling process, teachers have been able to assess individual students' abilities in listening, comprehension, note taking, oral expression, revision and editing.

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In answer to the question "In what ways do you use information gained through the retelling and rating sessions?" (Questionnaire, February 1996), most Delcroft teachers mentioned two ways in which they used what they learned: to guide whole class, small group or individual writing instruction, or to communicate with students and/or their parents about the student's strengths, needs and progress. As a guide to instructional planning, teachers across grade levels (K-5) have found the qualitative information gained from retelling and rating sessions to be invaluable. It has helped them to "pinpoint strengths and weaknesses," "target areas of concern," "plan mini-lessons on content and mechanics" and "determine groupings for small group instruction."

As a tool for communicating with students and parents about progress and abilities, teachers of students in the lower grades have found the students' written retellings to be especially useful. One first grade teacher comments that "The students, parents and I can see the growth." The same teacher highlights the possibilities for encouraging reflection by youngsters when she reports, " The students are surprised at their own growth. They are beginning to look at their own papers and choose which one they think is best." (M. Wardynski, Questionnaire, 2/96). Teachers of older students have also used retellings as a springboard for student choice and reflection, often incorporating them into writing and/or reading portfolios containing both teacher and student chosen pieces as well as student reflections. In general, it seems that, in addition to guiding instruction and being a tool for communicating with others about student progress, the retellings also served to prompt teachers to involve students more directly in assessing their own progress by examining samples of their own work.

Instructional Changes Related to the Written Retelling Project

It's a common saying in education now that 'assessment drives instruction.' One of the primary purposes of the Written Retelling Process at Delcroft has been to provide an assessment that is congruent with and that clearly values the kinds of holistic literacy teaching practices that the teachers, the school, and the district have been attempting to move toward. As Delcroft's principal, Bonnie George, said during the project's pilot year, "One purpose of this assessment is to affect what is being taught - to drive the teaching. The hope is that this type of assessment will help us move away from testing (and teaching) for one word answers." (Interview 2/15/94) Our research suggests that, to an exciting extent, the project is meeting this goal. Both our observations and teachers' reports indicate that taking students through a three-day written retelling process and then being involved in the collaborative assessment and rating of the students' written samples has made teachers keenly aware of the value of writing process approaches and has prompted them to emphasize writing to learn,

writing in the content areas, strategies for writing, active reading, learning to learn and collaborative learning activities.

Perhaps least surprising has been a reported increase in teachers' use of actual retellings, both oral and written, in their classrooms; this makes sense as teachers have seen, first hand, that good retellings are valued. Teachers report asking students to do both oral and written retellings in response to literature and to content area readings. They also describe an interesting focus on drawing as part of retelling; some teachers have students draw in response to stories, illustrate science lessons, add details to drawings as a form of revision, sequence pictures or do oral retellings using illustrations as clues.

In addition to more use of activities directly related to retellings, the project seems to have led to more writing, in general, in many classrooms. In answer to the question " What activities related to the written retelling have you used in your classroom, some teachers simply report "more writing," "daily writing," or, in the case of one kindergarten teacher, "introduced writing earlier in the year." The range of specific writing activities, in addition to retellings, that teachers cite include journal entries, ballads, letters, poems, books reports, summaries, time lines, movies, plays, travel brochures and advertisements. Delcroft students are being asked to use these types of activities across content areas. One explanation for this increase in writing activities could be that the retelling project helped some teachers begin to see writing in a new way. A fifth grade teacher explained that her involvement in the project resulted, for her in "a shift in paradigm"; she has begun to see writing as "a learning tool across the curriculum" (E. Maher, Questionnaire, 2/96).

Another striking effect of the retelling project is an increased awareness of the importance of teaching students strategies - for writing, for reading and for learning to learn. Teachers report asking students to practice using prewriting techniques such as story mapping, revision activities such as peer conferencing, and editing activities such as using an editing checklist, and a dictionary or thesaurus. Active reading strategies that teachers use as a result of the retelling project include identifying story components, creating Venn diagrams and creating new texts using details gleaned from stories. Learning to learn strategies that some teachers did not realize their students needed until they watched them during Day One of the retelling procedure include note taking from listening and from reading, outlining, and creating KWL charts or daily WILT reports.

A final teaching emphasis that teachers see as congruent with the expectations of the retelling process is collaborative learning. Many teachers noticed, during the retelling process, that their students enjoyed retelling their stories to partners, but that they were not necessarily adept at helping each other to revise. To help students become better collaborative learners, some teachers report using "think-pair- share"

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activities, peer conferencing, small group reporting and collaborative retellings of chapters in novels.

Perhaps an illustration of one holistic lesson can best illustrate the kinds of literacy instruction that are happening at Delcroft and that teachers attribute, in part, to the effects of a congruent teaching/assessment plan. Carol Jones, a fifth grade teacher, recently integrated the study of Antarctica (Social Studies), weather (Science) and survival (Health) through a collaborative story writing activity. In heterogeneous groups of four, her students worked together to determine the setting, characters, problem and solution for their story. To aid them in their research, the Learning Support Teacher for the fifth grade led students in activities around various forms of note taking from listening and reading. Students also practiced sharing their notes and adding to or changing them--a study strategy as well as a form of revision. By the time students had finished their stories, they had engaged in an integrated listening/talking/reading/writing activity across the content areas.

John Connor, another fifth grade teacher at Delcroft, observed that "With the thrust of writing across the curriculum, the written retelling project drives us to alter our teaching styles." (Questionnaire, 2/96) Comments like this and our observations indicate that the process has supported Delcroft teachers over the past three years as they have experimented with the kinds of holistic teaching and learning approaches which are advocated in the school's overall improvement plan. Although the actual retelling and rating sessions take place only twice a year, the project's consequences in terms of instructional change at the school have been widespread and powerful. It appears that the teaching/assessment project is an innovation which has started small and simple and which may, because of its congruence with the Delcroft's instructional goals, endure and continue to make a difference.

Enhancing Professional Development and Collaboration

In terms of professional development, teachers cite three major effects of the written retelling project: a wider, more informed perspective on the development of students' writing abilities across the grade levels; increased knowledge of integrated instructional and assessment strategies; and a deepened respect for the value of colleagues' expertise and for the benefits of collaborative efforts. As one first grade teacher put it: "I have enjoyed my participation in this project. It has offered me guidance in my teaching, given me an opportunity to gauge each child's progress, and opened positive, helpful dialogue amongst my grade partners." (M.P. Juisti, Questionnaire 2/96) In addition to these teacher described effects, our observation is that, as Delcroft teachers have educated each other through their adaptation and implementation of the project, they have also gained investment in the process of reform more generally as well as confidence in

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their abilities to question and to be a part of changing problematic or contradictory educational practices at their school.

An unusual aspect of the written retelling project is that it involves teachers in looking, together, at the work of students who are not in their own classrooms. Delcroft teachers found that this process helped them learn the range of ability levels they might expect to see at their grade level and thus put where their students "are" in perspective. A fourth grade teacher commented that "the process has given me a wider, more global view of the range of my students' writings relative to the whole grade." (D. Coyle, Questionnaire 2/96). A first grade teacher, who has taught many of the students who have been labeled special education told us "I can see first hand that most children go through the same stages. Consequently, I usually feel less discouraged when I look at my students' work." (P. Cascaden, Q 2/96). In addition to giving teachers a better sense of the writing abilities of the students at a particular grade level, participation in the rating sessions and in choosing retelling stories for their students has raised many questions for teachers about assessment strategies and writing development for students <u>across</u> grade levels. Teachers have begun to articulate concerns about needing to see an even wider picture in order to better understand how to best teach and assess writing to all students.

According to many Delcroft teachers, the written retelling process has been a form of professional development because it has encouraged them to explore and to learn new strategies for the instruction and assessment of integrated language arts across the curriculum. The first step in any lasting professional development is an awareness of what students need; several teachers have reported that the retelling project has given them a sense of these needs and of how to meet them. Maureen Fricker, a Learning Support teacher for the fourth grade, says that the retelling "gives you a sense of the importance of the writing process and keeps you in tune to the writing needs of your students. " Don Nickerson, another fourth grade teacher, writes that "Retelling increased my awareness of the importance of diversified strategies to meet the individual needs of my students" (Q 2/96). Toni Benson comments that, through the project, she has "learned new strategies for making children tune in to details and the order of events" (4th grade, Q 2/96).

Along with instructional strategies, several Delcroft teachers mention learning new, related assessment strategies as an outcome of the retelling project. In particular, the cross-grade "assessment artifact share" session held the first year of the project (11/93) gave teachers a chance to discuss their assessment ideas and questions with each other. Teachers' (anonymous) reaction sheets from that meeting highlight their excitement at seeing "the many things we can assess and the many ways we can assess them." Some teachers also list specific questions the discussion raised for

them which they intend to explore, such as "how can we best assess a student's metacognitive abilities?" and "how do I explain to parents that invented spelling is okay?" Perhaps most interesting - in terms of the effect on teachers of their involvement in the retelling project - are the larger questions teachers raise about assessment practices at the school. For example, Carol Jones, a fifth grade teacher, feels that the retelling project has created a teaching situation in which "assessment drives instruction." However, she wonders why, then "are our report cards not reflective of these retelling assessments?"

Another teacher wonders whether assessment/evaluation practices should be standardized by grade or by school, and what the implications of these different choices might be. A third asks "Don't we need time to live with the new literacy program and to develop assessment strategies more natural to our goals?" These questions are not easily answered, but that teachers are asking them reflects a thoughtful engagement in the larger issues of assessment and instruction that is one goal of any successful program of professional development.

Professional development for teachers is central to the implementation of the Written Retelling Assessment Project. Rather than passively receiving information and ideas from outside experts, the Delcroft faculty has been actively involved in working together to shape a teaching/assessment approach that will work for their particular context. One of the most striking outcomes of this type of implementation process has been teachers' positive feelings about collaborating with their colleagues. Principal Bonnie George, at the end of the first year on the project, commented " I believe that the Retelling Project has provided our staff with opportunities for collaboration and collegiality and that these positive experiences have proven the power of working in a group toward a common goal."

Her words are supported by the results of a teacher attitude survey completed by twenty three Delcroft teachers in June of 1994. The survey asked teachers to rate the influence of their participation in the project on five aspects of their professional lives. Possible ratings ranged from one (very negative effect) to five (very positive effect). The average rating for the item "How has your participation in the project affected your collaboration with fellow professionals?" was 4.87, an indication of a positive belief among teachers about the effect of the project on their collaboration with each other. More recent surveys and conversations with Delcroft teachers support his conclusion; their comments talk about the value of teacher dialogue and their growing sense that "teachers are the experts in what we do!" (Anon. reaction sheet). A fourth grade teacher compares the retelling project to other types of staff development in terms of its effects on collaboration: "It has provided a much more intense opportunity for the teachers in the team to write and interchange ideas and

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attitudes towards a specific educational area" (D. Coyle, Q 2/96). And a fifth grade teacher talks about the effects of this kind of 'interchange' on him: "I have developed an admiration and respect for my colleagues. Their expertise is invaluable to my success in the classroom. As a lifelong learner, my personal goals and expectations have changed" (J. Connor, Q 2/96).

As they have developed a stronger sense of themselves as experts and as full participants in the processes of educational change at Delcroft, teachers have articulated what they see as their needs as professionals and change agents involved in educational reform. First and foremost among these needs is time (probably the most frequently used word on all of the reaction sheets we have collected to date). After the first all-faculty meeting we held to introduce the retelling project (5/93), teachers were already concerned about the need for time to properly implement the plan. Their reaction sheets listed, as concerns: meeting time for teachers, time to decide on anchor papers, time to meet regularly to evaluate writing throughout the year, and the time involved in assessing each paper. After the 11/93 assessment workshop, many teachers answered the question "What needs to happen in terms of professional development?" in similar, if more specifically informed ways: "We need more shared time with the primary team to develop a checklist that can be used at report card time"; "we need time to discuss strategies across grade levels"; "we need to slow down and have more of these kinds of reflective conversations."

ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCES OF THE FACULTY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WRITTEN RETELLING PROCESS

Our first research question was: How and how well did the teachers implement the Written Retelling reform effort?

We used an adaptation of the Cole (1988) characteristics of assessment designed for instruction as a heuristic to answer this question based on the information reported in the previous section.

Characteristic 1. Quality judged by effect on instruction. It is clear from our report that the written retelling process effected instruction in a number of ways. Children listened to, orally retold and wrote and read their versions of a whole narrative and expository piece. Teachers reported that they continued to use this holistic activity and a wide variety of other integrative language arts approaches in the course of the implementation of the written retelling process and over the years.

The extent to which the teaching/learning/assessment process was implemented and student learning was increased is evident from empirical evidence including teacher reports of the significance of their collaboration in the course of establishing and revisiting the rating session, teacher reports of significance of their classroom work with children over the first three years of the study, and our own observational data as we observed

teachers at work with their peers in the rating sessions and in their classrooms.

Characteristic 2. Design determined by instructional goals and locally scored. The instructional purpose of the written retelling process was to improve the quality of academic learning by having children construct meaning using integrated listening/talking/writing/reading to comprehend literary and expository texts. Teachers, working collaboratively at grade levels, assessed the written products of this learning process using procedures developed by Botel but adapted by the teachers at each grade level.

Characteristic 3. Instructional *raison d'être.* The written retelling assessment existed because it met an instructional purpose. Since it was believed that assessment has a powerful influence in driving instruction, the leadership and faculty chose an assessment process that was congruent with the district's Goals 2000 reform plan and with the Pennsylvania Framework for Reading, Writing and Talking across the Curriculum (Lytle and Botel,1989).

Characteristic 4. Teacher-mandated and adapted to local context. The retellings serving both as teaching/learning and as assessment was presented for consideration as a framework. Because it was clearly a prototype learning experience that matched district goals, the principal and faculty of the Delcroft School volunteered to pilot the assessment framework process. As indicated earlier, teachers chose the literary and expository pieces and in a number of ways modified the framework for each grade.

Characteristic 5. Test tasks of instructional value. Children's tasks in the retelling process from which the assessment information is derived are tasks that have instructional value in themselves. Various forms of the retelling process have long been used as holistic pedagogy with positive results in teaching reading comprehension, oral language development and apprehension of text structure.

One of the limits of our assessment process is that retelling by itself does not tap into the many critical and creative kinds of experiences and opportunities for interpretation that should be part of a comprehensive democratic curriculum like reading and discussing whole books and stories, writing original material, writing about what stands out for them, etc. (Lytle and Botel, 1990, IRA/NCTE Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing, 1994.) This is why it is extremely important to have such a curriculum and to regard assessment as a continuous and comprehensive process involving many different kinds of assessments. As Supovitz (1997) concludes in his commentary, From Multiple Choice to Multiple Choices, "To seek greater equity, we have to develop a plethora of rigorously constructed assessment forms, understanding that...taken together, they

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will be a fairer measure of that complex thing we call knowledge. A diverse society deserves a more diverse assessment system (p.37)."

Characteristic 6. Provides immediate feedback, is informal and is used with other information over the course of the year. Since teachers gave, discussed and scored the assessment products (written retellings) in informal collaboration, they had rapid feedback which they used primarily as one means to chart the course for teaching/learning. The congruent processes of written retelling as both teaching/learning and assessment supported teachers' growing understanding of this linkage.

ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES

Our second research question was: Did the children make significant "value added" improvement in their content and mechanics scores on the narrative and expository written retellings? TABLES 1 and 2 present our findings.

TABLE 1

% OF TWO GROUPS OF CHILDREN WHO FROM BEGINNING KINDERGARTEN TO THE END OF FIRST GRADE SCORED A 7 OR 8 IN COMBINED NARRATIVE/EXPOSITORY RETELLINGS ON THE MODIFIED MARIE CLAY SCALE

Date of retellings	Grade	% getting 7 or 8
GROUP 1 (N=68)		
September 1993	K	1
June 1994	K	4
September 1994	1	7
June 1995	1	82
GROUP 2 (N=71)		
September 1994	K	0
June 1995	K	4
September 1995	1	6
June 1996	1	79

At the beginning and end of both kindergarten and grade one, we used a teacher Modified Clay Scale to assess children's' writing. TABLE 1 presents the per cent of two groups of children who scored 7 or 8 on that scale, each over a two year period. A 7 on the Clay Scale is defined as a recognizable story or exposition of three or more sentences and an 8 is defined a fairly well developed story or exposition. The children experienced a narrative and an expository retelling in September and June of each year and these scores were averaged.

The following patterns are evident in TABLE 1: Overall, the two groups have practically identical patterns of scores in each of the four retelling experiences. As expected, at the beginning of Kindergarten, approximately 1% score 7 or 8; by the end of Kindergarten 4% do; by the beginning of first grade 7% do and by the end of first grade approximately 80% do. In short, the great majority of children at Delcroft School over the two years have made a major leap into becoming "young authors". One of the limitations of the study is that we were not able to compare their performance with a control group to get a true "value added" result, but we believe from our consultation with Delcroft teachers and our own experiences that very few children in traditional programs would score at these levels at the end of first grade.

TABLE 2

% OF 51 CHILDREN WHO WERE CONTINUOUSLY ENROLLED AT THE DELCROFT SCHOOL OVER A 5 YEAR PERIOD (9/93-6/98), SCORING MORE THAN 50% ABOVE THE NORM ON PRE AND POST NARRATIVE AND EXPOSITORY RETELLING ASSESSMENTS

	Content				Mechanics			
Grade	Narrative		Expository		Narrative		Expository	
1	see Table 1							
2	9/94	6/94	9/94	6/95	9/94	6/95	9/94	6/95
	0	0	0	43	0	45	0	46
3	9/95	6/96	9/95	6/96	9/95	6/96	9/95	6/96
	0	14	0	19	0	17	0	46
4	9/96	6/97	9/96	6/97	9/96	6/97	9/96	6/97
	37	39	25	39	25	48	39	43
5	9/97	6/98	9/97	6/98	9/97	6/98	9/97	6/98
	34	36	17	18	20	32	20	32

TABLE 2 displays the % of the 51 children who were enrolled at Delcroft from beginning first grade to the end of the fifth grade who scored more than 50% above the local norm in four categories at the beginning and end of each school year. The percentages in TABLE 2 are often called "value added" (Olson, 1998) improvement, presumably a consequence of the instructional program and a reflection of actual gains in children's achievement over the initial performance of the local norming group. A zero would suggest no measurable improvement over the local norm, while a higher per cent would suggest the extent of improvement over the local norm.

There were a number of ways to display and analyze the Delcroft children's scores over the five years. The most detailed analysis would be to present in a table the per cent of children who, on the four variables, performed at the 1,2,3,4 and 5 levels. This would be most useful for teachers at each grade level. But for the purposes of this report we regard the structure of TABLE 2 as a useful prototype for answering our research question and for accountability purposes.

The data in TABLE 2 suggest the following general effects of the retelling process over the five years on these 51 children: 1.) by reading across the rows it appears that significant improvement took place for the most part in all four categories from the beginning to the end of each school year, and 2.) by reading down the columns it appears that in the fourth year significant improvement took place at the beginning of the school year as well. This second pattern is particularly interesting, since it documents a quasi-experimental effect based on the fact that children's individual scores were always compared with the original norming for each grade. If students were the same as the norming (control) group who were not involved in the reform effort, 50% of them would be expected to score above the norm. If there were no gains in performance TABLE 2 would show a 0. As a matter of fact, 25 to 39% (over the four subassessments) of this group of 51 children (the "experimental group") at the beginning of the fourth grade scored above the original norm This second general finding holds up in the fifth grade and suggests that it may take a number years--three in the case of our study students--of commitment to a written retelling assessment process like ours to get some of the most significant improvement.

A FINAL WORD

With respect to qualitative assessment Cole provides us with this insight: "...it seems that we have concentrated far more effort to date on assessment designed for measurement than on assessment designed for instruction...However...there appears to be at least the possibility of new forms of assessment that will be directly used in the service of learning (1988, pp. 114,116)." In our report, we have used an adaptation of Coles' Characteristics of Assessment Designed for Instruction to analyze and document the very successful implementation process and outcomes of the reform effort at Delcroft.

With respect to quantitative assessment, we agree with Hanushek and his colleagues when thy doubted that improved authentic assessment can lead reform by itself. As they have noted, "With accurate assessments of student performance, runs the argument, schools will automatically focus on improving test scores: teachers will adjust to improve student achievement, management decisions will become obvious, and reform will

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occur almost spontaneously. We know of no evidence to suggest this is a realistic expectation (1994. p.126)."

While our reform effort was centered around an authentic assessment, the design of our total effort was comprehensive with respect to the other necessary characteristics needed to insure success (Olson, 1999), including: support of the administrators and faculty, the clarity, strength and flexibility of the design, the allocation of money and time for extensive and continuous professional development,
the continuing on-site support of the design team and the appointment of a respected colleague from the staff to manage the reform process.

APPENDIX

A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING WRITTEN RETELLINGS

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The WRITTEN RETELLING PROCESS will extend over three days for each of two activities: THE STORY TELLER/AUTHOR ACTIVITY and THE NEWS RETELLING/NEWS REPORTER ACTIVITY

In each of these activities, it helps children to think of themselves as taking on the roles of professional readers and writers (Seaver and Botel, 1991.) The activities are integrative learning experiences which involve the linking of reading, writing and talking in comprehending stories and informational texts. The assessment piece is the written outcome of a process involving all of the language arts. Thus, the assessment is congruent with teaching/learning. Does it provide us with a measure of comprehension, of ability to compose orally and in writing, of control of the conventions of oral and written language? Clearly, the answer seems to be yes to all of these developing abilities.

1. THE STORY TELLER/AUTHOR ACTIVITY

The teacher begins this activity by engaging the class in a discussion of storytelling and authors. The idea here is that children should come to think of themselves as storytellers and authors. Furthermore, adopting goals such as reading/writing/talking like actors, lawyers, historians, and scientists provide socially significant, purposeful and motivational activities for students in the several content areas (Seaver and Botel 1991).

A banner in the class might read:

WE ARE LEARNING TO BE STORYTELLERS AND AUTHORS

The teacher tells the class that one of the goals throughout the year is to practice storytelling and authoring to become more skillful in those art forms. She tells them that one of the many ways they will become more skillful will come from retelling and writing stories that she will read to them and that these stories will come from many different countries and cultures. That experience will help enrich and extend all students' knowledge of their own and others' ways of telling stories. Other activities which contribute to this craft include making up their own stories, telling and writing about stories they have read, telling and writing about stories they have heard and read from the point of view of one of the characters, etc.

She also tells them that they will keep some of these written stories in folders called portfolios and that over the school year they will create a large collection of their writing and that she and they will be able to see how they have improved in their skills of reading and writing by examining their portfolios.

Outline of the Story Retelling Process (to be adapted/refined by individual faculties at each grade level)

Day 1. The teacher tells the class that she will read a short story aloud without stopping for discussion. A decision has to be made by all teachers at the same grade level regarding whether children will simply hear the story, have copies of the story while they listen, see it in a Big Book or on an overhead projector.)

Following that, the teacher reads the story aloud again , during which and after which children will write down some brief notes or draw sketches of what stands out for them in the story. (The beginning and end of the year choices should be similar in terms of length and complexity. A short story about the length of an Aesop fable works well. In K and 1 we propose that teachers choose equivalent Big Books for the beginning and end of the school year experience.)

Then, children pair up and take turns to retell their story to one another in their own words. They then write their first drafts. Kindergarten and first grade children are encouraged to draw and "write" their stories.

The reason the teacher reads the story aloud is that it enables all children, even the lowest performing readers, to have access to the story and to participate fully in the activities at their own levels.

Day 2. The next day the teacher encourages the children to revise or improve their first drafts by reading their drafts to their partners. Listening to themselves read their stories aloud has been found to stimulate revision. After the children read to each other, the teacher encourages partners to ask each other questions to get them to tell more about their stories.

Then they do a second revision which involves re-examining their drafts by thinking about the following questions which are given to children as individual revision checklists as well as being posted on a permanent chart in the classroom. The teachers discuss these aspects of a well told story briefly with the children as they examine their stories. (They keep their drafts and staple them to the bottom of the revised versions.)

QUESTIONS I CONSIDER WHEN REVISING MY WORK

check: Do I have all the characters, settings, actions and messages in the story?

check: Do I want to change any of my words or sentences so they sound better?

Day 3. The teacher gives the children a chance to edit their stories so they are ready for "publication." That is, they understand that they will complete a piece they regard as their best work--something they will be proud to share with classmates, parents and others. As part of the editing step, students should refer to the questions on the chart below.

QUESTIONS I CONSIDER WHEN EDITING MY WORK

check: Are my spellings correct?

check: Are my capitalizations correct?

check: Is my punctuation correct?

Both of these sets of questions can be modified by the teachers at each grade level to accommodate children's' developmental levels and local expectations. As before these are also provided as individual editing checklists to each child.

THE NEWS RETELLING/NEWS REPORTER ACTIVITY

A similar set of teaching/learning and assessment procedures can be used with informational writing. In this case children are taught to think of themselves as news reporters. The chart posted in the room for the Day 2 revision activity is like the one for story retelling except for the first check:

QUESTIONS I CONSIDER WHEN REVISING MY WORK

check: Do I include the who, what, where, when, why in my retelling?

check: Do I want to change any of my words or sentences so they sound better?

The classroom banner for this activity says

WE ARE LEARNING TO BECOME NEWS REPORTERS

A suggested source for the pieces to be read aloud would be the cover story found in The Weekly Reader, Scholastic periodicals, etc. (Other activities over the year would involve children writing pieces for a class

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newspaper on current events of interest, writing about a historical event as if they were present as reporters, etc.)

Now, let's analyze what we have done so far. When children have completed these activities they have (1) practiced the storytelling and author's craft, (2) practiced related comprehension skills involving story structure relationships among characters, setting, actions, story problems and resolutions, (3) been engaged in very integrative language experiences where they have listened/talked/written/read, (4) collaborated with peers, (5) worked through a writing process and (6) been engaged in a productive form of assessment as they engaged in self reflection through the revision process.

Qualitative Assessment

There are three kinds of qualitative assessments involved in implementing this framework. First, in teaching this way teachers are able to observe the children as they participate in the activity. While doing that they are, in fact, assessing children's writing processes and products to determine the specific needs of individual children and general needs of the class. Such qualitative assessment is one of the most helpful forms of assessment since it so powerfully informs teaching.

Second, later in this framework it will be seen that teachers at grade level look together at the children's written work to rank them. While they do so they are, in fact, looking closely at the qualities of children's writing where they can make instructional as well as ranking decisions. Teachers' shared discussion of children's work might be likened to a staffing conference of doctors as they examine the patient's records as the basis for decisions on further treatment. In the case of teachers, they will gain greater insight into the needs of their children.

Third, there should be a continuous study of the implementation process involving observation and reporting of the collaborative assessment process, classroom teaching/learning activities, interviews with teacher on what changes they are making, interviews with children and examination of the portfolios children are keeping.

Quantitative Assessment

There are stakeholders who expect to have the results of more quantitative assessment. These always include administrators, board members, parents, and other taxpayers. Whereas the teacher and children are more interested in the process of personal reflection about teaching/learning the other stakeholders usually ask for evidence of outcomes or accountability in quantitative terms. They want to know whether children are making significant and measurable gains in their performance. Failure to produce such evidence often undermines the confidence and support of these stakeholders.

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To provide for this need I propose two ways (one for grades K and 1, and one for grades 2 and above) for rating the story retelling piece and the informational piece described earlier to be given at the beginning and end of each school year. The differences between the beginning and end of the year scores, particularly over a period of years, will document growth in the performance of groups of children and individual children as well as provide helpful evidence of the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Rating Children's Writing in Kindergarten and Grade 1*

K and 1 teachers collaborate in rating children's writing using this scale or one adapted from it by the teachers in each school.

1 Drawing only

2 Scribble writing

3 Letters only

4 Any recognizable word related to the story

5 Any recognizable phrase related to the story

6 Any recognizable sentence related to the story

7 Any recognizable story of three or more sentences related to the story

8 A fairly well developed story with characters and actions

*adapted from Marie Clay, Early Detection of Reading Difficulties, 1979. Heinemann, and further modified by the Delcroft K-1 teachers.

Rating Children's Writing in Grades 2 and Above

Ratings in grade 2 and above should be done by all the teachers in each grade level at each school. This will assure ratings that are school based at the start, i.e. based on the norm of that school so that it will be possible to compare future performance of children in that school with the norm of their own school. (This is like "handicapping" in sports and contests where less expert players get advantages to equalize the chances of winning. People speak of this as "providing a level playing field.")

All the teachers of the same grade level meet and combine the revised writing pieces of all children in their classes. (All papers should have had the teachers' and children's names and the date on the back of the piece.) Teachers divide the papers into four equal piles in terms of the quality of the content only in the first round. (A second round will focus

on the conventions of writing only, thereby providing another score for each piece of writing.) The top pile will include the best quarter of the papers which will be marked C4(C is for content), the second top fourth are each marked C3, the third fourth are each marked C2, and the bottom fourth are each marked C1. These should be recorded on the back of each piece.

In the process of rating the pieces, teachers, by the nature of the collaboration, will have negotiated agreement. In making the judgment, the pieces are read aloud by one of the teachers (taking turns) with the other teachers listening for what the children were trying to express. This negotiated process (while looking for qualities such as organization, accuracy, choice of words, originality, insights, and humor) are likely to contribute to high agreement (reliability) of teacher judgments. Again, the conventions of writing should be ignored in this round. (Occasionally a fine piece of writing will not be an accurate rendition of the original story, but may have a creative flair. It is best to keep open to unexpected possibilities. After all, one of the main goals of the retelling experience is helping students become better storytellers.)

Teachers then choose the lowest pieces in quartiles 2, 3, and 4 and the strongest paper in quartile 4 designating these four pieces as the anchor papers for content ratings. Schematically (below) the display of papers are represented with the right hand X representing the best paper and the left hand x representing the weakest paper. The capital Xs at the left of the 2s, 3s, and 4s and the one at the right of the 4s are the Anchor Papers. They become the yardstick for the rating of future papers. Thus, the question teachers ask in subsequent rating sessions as they look at each paper at the end of the year and at the beginning and end of later years is this:

Where would this paper have been placed in the original ranking?

In future assessments, If the piece is as good as or better than the 4 Anchor Paper, it would receive a 4 rating. If the paper is as good as or better than the 3 Anchor Paper, but not as good as the 4 Anchor Paper, it would receive a 3 rating. If the paper is as good as or better than the 2 Anchor Paper, but not as good as the 3 Anchor Paper, it would receive a 2 rating. There is one additional question that can be asked in later ratings. Is the written retelling as good as or better than the best paper in the original rating where anchor papers were determined? Such papers could be given a rating of 5. This means that children who got a 4 rating initially and who have improved enough can get a 5.

1s	2s	3s	4s
xxxxxxxxxxxxx	Xxxxxxxxxxxxx	Xxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Xxxxxxxxxxxxx
	C2	C3	C4	C5
	M2	M3	M4	M5

These five pieces (Xs/Anchor Papers) should be marked with a capital C2, C3, C4 and C5 (C is for content) on the back of the pieces and these writing pieces should be Xeroxed and the originals put back in the pile.

Next, teachers rank all the papers again from high to low but this time based entirely on the conventions of writing. Unlike the rating for content where they simply listen to the stories, in this reading all teachers have to look at the pieces to make their judgment based on spelling, punctuation, capitalization and usage. This time the anchor pieces in each quartile are marked M2 (M is for mechanics), M3, M4 and M5. As in the case of the content rating, the lowest paper in M2, M3, and M4 and the highest paper in M4 are chosen as Anchor Papers and marked on the back of the pieces. These are Xeroxed and the originals returned to the pile. As with the Content rating, subsequent papers at the end and beginning of the school year are rated by reference to these anchor papers.

Use of the Anchor Papers

By consulting these Anchor papers from time to time over the year, teachers will be able to learn more about the instructional needs of their children.

All of the agreements of teachers at any grade level regarding the conduct of the beginning teaching/learning/assessment process become standardized for that grade in the school for the several years of the study. The agreements along with the student anchor papers become the standard procedures for the beginning and end of the year's teaching/learning/assessment activities.

Of course, this sets no limit on the variations and richness of learning activities teachers use throughout the year. But if the quantitative results are to have any meaning there needs to be an agreed upon and fairly invariable process for the first and later conduct of the written retelling experiences.

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